
Introduced Version

**HOUSE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. _____**

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION urging the Government of Turkey to cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition, ecclesiastical succession, and the right to train clergy of all nationalities, and to respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Duncan, Harris

_____, read first time and referred to Committee on

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Whereas, The Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in Istanbul, Turkey, is the sacred See that presides in a spirit of brotherhood over a communion of the self-governing churches of the Orthodox Christian world;

Whereas, The See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who is the 269th in direct succession to the Apostle Andrew and holds titular primacy as primus inter pares, meaning "first among equals" in the community of Orthodox churches worldwide;

Whereas, In 1994 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, along with leaders of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance, which brought together Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders for an interfaith dialogue to help end the Balkan conflict and the ethnic conflict in the Caucasus region;

Whereas, In 1997 the Congress of the United States awarded Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew with the Congressional Gold Medal;

Whereas, Following the terrorist attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew



gathered a group of international religious leaders to produce the first joint statement with Muslim leaders that condemned the 9/11 attacks as "anti-religious";

Whereas, In October 2005, the Ecumenical Patriarch, along with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance II to further promote peace and stability in southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and Central Asia via religious leaders' interfaith dialogue, understanding, and action;

Whereas, The Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million members worldwide with more than 2 million members in the United States;

Whereas, Since 1453 the continuing presence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament to the religious coexistence of Christians and Muslims;

Whereas, This religious coexistence is in jeopardy because the Government of Turkey refuses to recognize the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is considered a minority religion by the Turkish government;

Whereas, The Government of Turkey has limited the candidates available to hold the office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only Turkish nationals, and from the millions of Orthodox Christians living in Turkey at the turn of the 20th century, and due to the continued policies of minority discrimination during this period by the Turkish government, there remain fewer than 3,000 of the Ecumenical Patriarch's flock left in Turkey today;

Whereas, The Government of Turkey has reneged on its agreement to reopen the Theological School on the island of Halki, which the Turkish government closed in 1971, thus impeding training for Orthodox Christian clergy;

Whereas, The Turkish government has confiscated nearly 94 percent of the properties of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and has placed a 42 percent tax retroactive to 1999 on the



Baloukli Hospital and Home for the Aged, a charity hospital run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate;

Whereas, The European Union, a group of nations with a common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its peoples, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005;

Whereas, The European Union defined membership criteria for accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating candidate countries to achieve certain levels of reform, including stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for and protection of minorities and human rights;

Whereas, The Turkish government's current treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership conditions and goals of the European Union;

Whereas, Orthodox Christians in this Commonwealth and throughout the United States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of the continued actions of the Turkish government; and

Whereas, In November 2006, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the order of St. Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen who each have been honored with a Patriarchal title, or "offlkion," by the Ecumenical Patriarch for their outstanding service to the Orthodox Church, will send an American delegation to Turkey to meet with Turkish government officials, as well as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, regarding the Turkish government's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Therefore,

*Be it resolved by the House of Representatives
of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana,
the Senate concurring:*

- 1 SECTION 1. That the Indiana General Assembly urges the
- 2 Government of Turkey to uphold and safeguard religious and human
- 3 rights without compromise.



1 SECTION 2. That the Indiana General Assembly urges the
2 Government of Turkey to cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical
3 Patriarchate.

4 SECTION 3. That the Indiana General Assembly urges the
5 Government of Turkey to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate
6 international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train
7 clergy of all nationalities.

8 SECTION 4. That the Indiana General Assembly urges the
9 Government of Turkey to respect the property rights and human rights
10 of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

11 SECTION 5. That the Principal Clerk of the House of
12 Representatives transmit copies of this resolution to the President of the
13 United States, to the United States Ambassador to the Republic of
14 Turkey, and to the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United
15 States.

